




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

Record of Proceedings, 26 October 2021

MOTION

Business Program

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (11.30 am): The first question we need to ask ourselves is: why are we in here debating this business motion? It never used to exist. We used to just have the business of the House go to government and there would be a debate. In that debate anybody who wished to speak, as is their right because they have been voted into this House to speak on behalf of their electorate—the voters of Queensland—were allowed to speak. I remember being in government for a period of time.

A government member: A short time.

Mr WATTS: Yes, it was a short government and there was a reason for that.

Government members interjected.

Mr WATTS: Yes, there was a reason for that. The reason was that there were some things that were done that were unreasonable. What we see now is the arrogance, the exuberance and the control for power on this side of the parliament. They crave power.

Last year during the Electoral Act debate there was less than 24 hours for hundreds of amendments to change the way that our democracy operates. When we analyse that document now, as we were never given enough time to do then, what do we find? We find a government who used taxpayers' money to fund an election campaign, who used taxpayers' money to do research and exempted that research so it would not be captured in the cap. We find a government that has grown arrogant, it has grown lazy and it has grown careless.

We find legislation coming into this chamber that needs to be rushed through quickly because we are about to give somebody two pensions. We find legislation coming into this place where the amendments are dumped in their hundreds, not going through a committee structure. The committee structure was set up in a bipartisan way to try to avoid the kind of stupid mistakes that get made by this arrogant government when it comes to legislation.

Legislation is brought into this place and we find the debate is guillotined. The people of Queensland, who voted for every single one of us in here, have their voices denied by this government because the government does not care about their voices. The job of opposition is in the name. It is to hold the government to account to oppose things and to make sure that the government has thought things through carefully.

With the so-called family-friendly hours, which deny any of us who come from regional Queensland the ability to get home to our families—we would rather see a longer debate go on into the evening because that is why we are all down here—we see a lot of members rushing off to functions, trying to pep up the numbers for the next election, not actually doing the job of this House. We see them working to make sure that they keep the power.

We know what this game is all about. We know what this motion is about. We know that it is all about restricting the voices of others, restricting the voices who were voted into this place by the people of Queensland, making sure that they are not allowed to hold the government to account, making sure that they are not allowed to have a debate and raise points that their constituents have raised with them, making sure that the government can rush through their agenda and get out of here as quickly as they can for fear that the media may actually pick up on some of the massive errors they make and the times they have to come back into this place to fix up the mistakes that they have made.

We see the power of this House being abused on a regular basis by the government. This business motion is just an example of how they try to try to control everything in the state to their own advantage. They crave power. We know that it is not about serving the people of Queensland because, if it were about serving the people of Queensland, why would they have their voices denied in this place?

Mr Dick: Are they crazy in Canberra too, are they?

Mr WATTS: I hear the member squawking over there. He ran away from Greenslopes to Woodridge and he now tries to silence me in this place. I will not be silenced by the arrogant Treasurer. I will not be silenced by him. I will not be silenced by anybody on the other side of this House, because this House is the people's house. It was the people who put me here.

This business motion is against everything that is democratic in this state. It is nothing to do with good governance. It is simply about silencing people who would have an alternative point of view. That is what it is about. It is about silencing people who would have an alternative point of view. I, for one, will not be silenced by this arrogant government who will not listen to the people of Queensland.

(Time expired)